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for Details

Holiday 2016 | Winter 2017

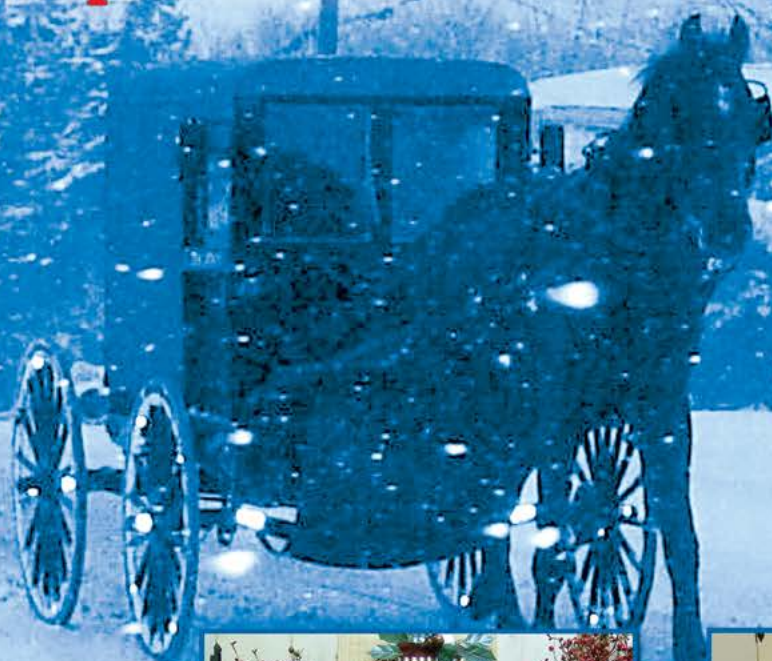
AMISH COUNTRY NEWS

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Shop Jakes...



Inside Amish Country News...

Magic Lantern Theater
Dazzles With Festive
Holiday Production

Holiday Shopping
In Amish Country...
All You Need To Know

Shopping Area Thrift
Stores Supports Global
Relief Efforts & Charity

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DUTCH HAVEN LANCASTER COUNTY LANDMARK

While driving along Route 30 in Lancaster County, you may see a few unfamiliar, if not unique, sites. You may catch a glimpse of some folks dressed a little unusually. You'll probably see a few horse-drawn carriages instead of cars. And, you'll undoubtedly notice the Dutch Haven windmill. This landmark building has been drawing thousands of visitors each week to Lancaster County for the past 67 years. Opening first as a restaurant in 1946, the Dutch Haven operated with great success with a world famous Shoo Fly pie recipe.

Today, the Dutch Haven staple is still "America's Best Shoo Fly Pie." All you have to do is pass through the door and you will be offered a sample taste of this famous pie—warmed and topped with whipped cream, just like it was always served in the restaurant, years ago.

Some 40,000 pies will be sold at the Dutch Haven this year alone. While most of these shoo fly pies are purchased over the counter, some are shipped UPS. Many pies are sold to faithful customers who have been buying

them from Dutch Haven for over half a century!

As always at Dutch Haven, the famous pie that was featured in Time magazine is just part of the story. The windmill building now houses one of, if not the best, selections of primitive Amish pine furniture in the area. Corner cupboards, pie safes, chests, and shelves are all available. Hundreds of pieces of Amish woodcrafts fill what once were the dining rooms of this wonderful old building. In addition, thousands of other items from pot holders to copper crafts, T-shirts, small wood crafts, a stunning selection of pottery, and much more make Dutch Haven a true shopping experience.

Visiting Dutch Haven - "the place that made Shoo Fly Pie famous" - will help to make your trip to Pennsylvania Dutch Country even more memorable. 

**Come Taste
America's Best
Shoo Fly Pie
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Dutch Haven is open 7 days, Sunday–Thursday. 9am–7pm and Friday and Saturday 9am–9pm. For more information about this Lancaster County landmark call 717.687.0111.



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2857-A Lincoln Hwy. E., Ronks, PA 17572 717.687.0111 - www.dutchhaven.com



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Jake's is one of the best places to score Lazy One apparel. Lazy One became famous for humorous pajamas and quirky socks and shirts, and Jake's carries the entire line. Lazy One is nestled within the Rocky Mountains of Northern Utah and began with a man, his wife, and their dream to provide the world with what was sorely needed--comical boxer shorts. Armed with the original philosophy that "humor is funny," they began "moosing around" with ideas, ultimately producing not only "cheeky" boxers, but also PJ tees, sleepwear and more, all featuring original, and strangely endearing, designs of wacky wildlife. Fashionable and funny, Lazy One is a lot of fun to wear, and is equally enjoyable to browse through at Jake's.

Jake's also offers many locally made Amish goods, such as brooms that "stand up" to the task of cleaning a whole home. (You'll get the joke when you go and see the brooms at Jake's and learn how to test for quality workmanship.) A local Amish craftsman also makes unusual tobacco lathe wine racks which Jake's has introduced to their happy customers.

Getting to know Jake's Country Trading Post is like making a new friend. There's never a dull moment when walking the aisles of this spacious country store with fashionable merchandise, and the family behind this business is ever personable and friendly.

"All of the staff at Jake's would like to thank everybody for making 2016 such a terrific

year. We hope to see all our friends in 2017 as well as meeting and making many new friends." —Ed & Melissa Jackson, proprietors.

Visitors who have been to Jake's many times know well the numerous reasons to go back again. The selection at Jake's continues to change and renew with fascinating lines of purses and trendy apparel including scarves, ponchos, socks, gloves, and much more.

Ladies find shopping for handbags often makes their day, most likely, for the men in their lives, finding a new purse or clutch isn't as appealing. However, Jake's has the guys covered too. Jeremy, the official Jake's sports guy, has included all the latest for sports fans with lots of team support goods. More than a few square feet of floor space are dedicated

Get to Know **JAKE'S COUNTRY TRADING POST**

By Clinton Martin



to auto accessories like team steering wheel covers, hitch plates, floor mats, and other cool items. For the home they'll find cups, mugs, bottle openers, clocks, signs, window clings, serving ware, and even a line of team tooth brushes.

But, to really impress upon the neighbors who the team of choice is, Jake's has a fine outdoor lineup of great team gear – tree faces (team swag you attach to your trees to give them a great visual), flags, wind chimes, even a stumpy selection of grotesque garden gnomes sporting team paraphernalia.

Seasonal choices are also in vogue at Jake's. A large selection of florals, wreaths, berry garlands, and candle rings will entice visitors of all ages ring in the Holidays. Family gatherings, meals, movie nights, caroling,

wassail—whatever the family traditions, a certain décor and atmosphere are necessary. Jake's has the goods to make any home the place to celebrate.

Truth be told, Jake's is actually more like two stores on the same property. There is an upper and a lower building. The lower building now has locally hand crafted brooms and lots of bird feeders and houses. This is also where the outdoor patio and garden merchandise are displayed.

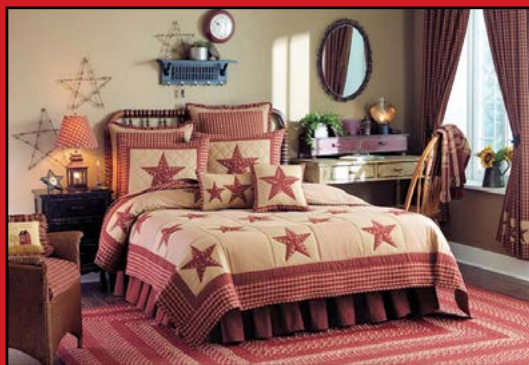
The staff at Jake's is always friendly and ready to help visitors find what they need to decorate any room for any season. Put their know-how to the test and enjoy a visit to Jake's today. You'll shake a few hands, fill a shopping bag or two, and walk away imagining your next visit to this new old friend.

Jake's Country Trading Post is located at 2954 Lincoln Hwy. East, Gordonville PA 17529. Call (717) 687-8980, or visit their website at www.jakeshomeaccents.com for more information. 





On Route 30 Near Paradise • 2954 Lincoln Highway East
717.687.8980 • www.jakeshomeaccents.com



Shopping with and for style in Amish Country

By Clinton Martin

If you know where to shop in Amish Country, you know how to see Amish Country in its purest light. If you've ever heard someone say, or heaven-forbid thought it yourself, that Amish Country is too commercial, built-up, and paved-over, then you simply need to peel back the veil, toss your shopping list in the trash for good measure, and follow me on a step-by-step shopping excursion that leaves all those chain retailers that dot the Fortune 500 Companies in the rearview mirror.

First, where to start? Well, no matter what time of day you decide to tote a shopping bag in Amish Country, it can't be more than an hour or two away from mealtime, so start by tucking in some delicious Amish Country foods, and pick up a few must-have items as gifts, too.

From the Oven

Baked goods are a wonderful option since they keep well, don't need to be refrigerated, and come in right-sized options for immediate gift-giving. Not unexpectedly, Amish Country bursts at the seams with old-fashioned, from-scratch, family-owned and operated bakeries.

Shoo-Fly Pie should come to mind and that means you head to Dutch Haven, the iconic windmill landmark along Route 30 just East of Miller's Smorgasbord, and enjoy a free taste of Amish Country's most famous pie. There you can decide how many lucky people on your list will be sent a pie shipped expertly by the folks at Dutch Haven. This is the bakery that made Shoo-Fly Pie famous.

For Whoopie Pies, those fantastic sweet and

moist cakes-gone-sandwiches, you need to head to Hershey Farm, a bakery within a restaurant beside a motel along Route 896 in Strasburg, which also happens to be the home of the annual Whoopie Pie Festival.

Now as far as cookies go, the Bird-in-Hand Bake Shop on Gibbons Rd. carries a dizzying variety, especially around Christmastime.

Look for my favorite, the Snickerdoodle, and make sure to pick up a cup of freshly brewed coffee for dunking purposes.

Dutch Haven—717-687-0111

Hershey Farm—800-827-8635

Bird-in-Hand Bake Shop—717-656-7947

From the Butcher

When sugary sweets just won't do, and savory meats are called for, Amish Country provides in a big way. As you can imagine, an agrarian-centered community like ours offers many different choices for the best off a butcher's block.

The Bird-in-Hand Farmers Market is a popular stop along Route 340, offering numerous old-world smoked meats, fresh cheeses and deli items. Thankfully, the market is open year-round Fridays and Saturdays, plus Wednesdays too through the end of November.

Continued on Page 7



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WHAT'S NEXT

Detail: SPUYTEN DUWIL by Patricia Hobbs

Shopping with and for style in Amish Country

(Continued from Page 6)

Also not to be missed, and the subject of our most recent October issue cover, is the amazing Amish Country success story, Zook's Homemade Chicken Pies. These delicious savory pies have generous chunks of tender meats tucked into a flaky and buttery crust and come in three varieties, chicken, beef, and sausage. You buy them, take them home, finish them off in the oven, and voila!

Bird-in-Hand Farmers Market—
717-393-9674
Zook's Homemade Chicken Pies—
717-768-0239

From the Brewery

Finally, if you'd rather buy Amish Country in a bottle, and savor it one sip at a time with friends and family, the Amish Country you seek is quietly waiting in barrels and casks, make that a stainless steel tank or two, at the area's orchards, dairies, and breweries. The locally craft-brewed Rumspringa Brewing Company proves there are those in Amish Country who know and respect the noble themes of Hops, Malts, Worts, and Esters (all good words if you're into beer.) Find your way to their IPA by traveling Route 340 between the villages of Bird-in-Hand and Intercourse, looking for the big red barn about half-way between the two.

Rumspringa Brewing Company—
717-768-7194

From the Amish

With a satisfied appetite, and a few gifts packed away, the real retail pursuits are only just beginning. Traditional shops, boutiques, and craft repositories are myriad in Amish Country, and no, I'm not including the big-box chains you can find in Anywhere, USA. In fact, in Amish Country, there are a number of Amish entrepreneurs embodying the economic diversity of the Plain People. While many Amish families farm for a living, many supplement, or even supplant farming with small businesses. Visit a few of my favorites to experience a true sense of Amish Country shopping. Just remember, all of the following businesses are closed on Sundays.

Michael Fisher and his family operate an all-around traditional home-goods store, which stocks many of the items that his local clientele depend on. As that customer-base happens to be largely Amish, the store's

Continued on Page 18



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Lancaster PA**



Christmas: One Word Said Best with Two Attractions By Mark Sullivan

during the late 1800's. Using one of fewer than 100 antique triennial Magic Lanterns in the world, spectacular hand-painted images are projected onto the big screen by a multi-talented "Showman," who weaves words and music together to bring to life some of Christmas's most beloved stories! The heartwarming Victorian celebration is not to be missed, and this year includes the rarely seen Charles Dickens story of "Gabriel Grubb and the Goblins." The theater is located at the Plain & Fancy Farm Restaurant on Route 340, between Bird-In-Hand and Intercourse (717-768-8400, ext.210).

At the amazing National Christmas Center (717-442-7950), off Route 30 East in Paradise, the season is alive in this stunning attraction filled with displays and Christmas nostalgia from local customs to traditions around the world. The Tudor Towne Animated Story Book Village, the First Christmas, the Toyland Train Mountain, and even a visit from old Santa Claus himself at his North Pole Workshop... the number of

'Tis the season of giving and celebration and there are few things that say "Merry Christmas" better than the Magic Lantern Show at the Plain & Fancy Theater, "A Christmas Journey," and the iconic National Christmas Center.

These two popular Amish Country Christmas attractions are combining to give you an experience you won't soon forget. And, you will save money too! The package, a "Christmas Combo Spectacular," gives you the opportunity to purchase a combination ticket for both the Magic Lantern Show and the National Christmas Center for only \$19.95, saving you \$9.50 if you were to purchase the tickets separately!

In "A Christmas Journey," the holidays come alive with music, comedy, drama and live storytelling...just like it would have been

Christmas themed rooms and displays will truly fill you with the spirit!

I urge you to make your Holidays memorable with these two wonderful family activities. And take advantage of the Christmas Combo Spectacular! This special combo can be purchased at either attraction or online at www.magiclanterntheater.com.



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Available at these local stores

Old Village Store, Bird-in-Hand

717-397-1291

BirdinHandAntiqueMarket.com

Kauffman's Market, Intercourse

717-768-7112

KauffmansFruitFarm.com

Visit www.Bismoline.com

The Greatest Christmas Display in the USA

By Brad Igou



Koziar's Christmas Village is a spectacular holiday display located on Christmas Village Road, two miles off Route 183 in Bernville. It has been a well known, family owned, seasonal attraction since its founding by William M. Koziar in 1948. Every night the Koziar farm is transformed into a winter fairyland.

Driving through the darkened countryside, you will suddenly find yourself in a dazzling valley set aglow with more Christmas lights than you have ever seen before. Adding to the magnificent beauty is the spectacular reflection of those thousands and thousands of lights in the lake situated in front of the main house.

Visit the various buildings filled with Trim-the-Tree ideas, indoor and outdoor train displays, glass-enclosed buildings, and many shops filled with unique Christmas displays, ornaments, and souvenirs. Enjoy the aroma of freshly baked cookies in the Country Kitchen and browse in Santa's toy shop filled with unusual toys and gifts for children of all ages. See the unique handmade train platform and follow the trains through the tunnels, across the trestles, around the miniature town located in the large Refreshment Barn. Come talk to Santa and his helpers, and see your favorite cartoon and fairy tale characters throughout the Village.

In its 69 year history, Koziar's Christmas Village has received many awards, including Best Outdoor Christmas Display in the World, and the Award of Excellence as One of the Top Attractions in Pennsylvania. Visiting here is truly like "Walking in a Winter Wonderland." You will take home many happy memories of an old-fashioned Christmas. For directions see ad on this page. 



Koziar's Christmas Village

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KoziarsChristmasVillage.com
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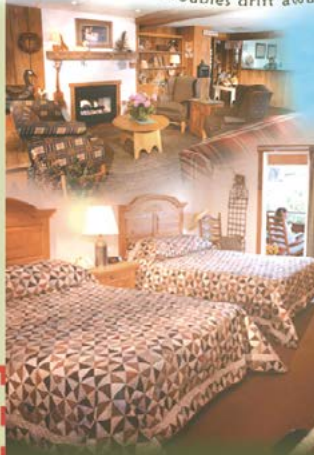
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"Gifts That Make A Difference"

By Clinton Martin

In 1920, a group of Mennonites created the Mennonite Central Committee to aid hungry people in Russia and Ukraine. Today, the MCC is at work in every continent except Antarctica and Australia. Regional offices in 50 countries operate as bases from which disaster relief, vocational development, or peace-building reaches at least 60 nations. For example in areas of Burkina Faso, where farming families grapple with malnutrition and erratic rainfall, MCC-supported food security projects are making a difference in farmers' fields and on families' tables. Before this MCC-supported community garden project began, villagers often had to hike miles to the nearest market, where even small amounts of vegetables were too expensive for most families.

Today though, farmers harvest nutritious onions, tomatoes and cabbages even during the dry season, due to training from MCC's SALT (Serving And Learning Together) workers. That's critical in an area where malnutrition is common and some 30 per cent of children under five experience stunted growth.

Teaching the principles of conservation agriculture and intercropping is part of MCC's work. In intercropping, for instance, cowpeas are planted among staple crops like sorghum and maize. They not only increase the health of the soil, but also provide farmers with an additional cash crop.

One mother in the increased farming competency program explained, "In the past, whenever we went to the hospital with our children, nurses knew that our children were not well fed. We did not understand and we did not have the means to buy vegetables for our children," she says. "Now that we produce our own vegetables, this problem is solved and our children are rarely sick and they grow normally. Now we always consume vegetables. As a mother, it is a joy to see your children in great health. We have fewer worries and we grow vegetables in the dry season, so we now also have money to buy better clothing and participate in the development of our village."

All this great work takes more than just a desire and a mission. It takes money to accomplish. Where does it all come from? Actually much of the money generated for supporting the MCC's efforts comes out of our own backyards. MCC benefit sales, such as quilt auctions, are a common way for local chapters to raise money. Just recently, a quilt named "Plain & Fancy" sold at an MCC sale for \$9,000. Over 100 talented Amish and Mennonite women had worked on the painstaking creation of the now famous textile.

But a \$9,000 quilt is only a drop in the bucket when it comes to filling the coffers of the MCC. Over 12 million dollars of the MCC's annual budget comes from a very interesting source --- a network of MCC Thrift Shops throughout the US and Canada. The largest concentration of MCC Thrift Shops is right here in PA (19 shops) and the largest concen-

tration in PA is, of course, right here in Amish Country (5 shops).

While you're in Amish Country, please visit these shops. You'll know that while you are filling your shopping bag with your newly found bargains, you are also helping a worthy cause. Seek out as many of these shops as you like, and discover a whole new kind of shopping. Find out more about the MCC in general at www.mcc.org. For more information about the MCC Thrift Shop network, visit www.thrift.mcc.org.

Country Gift & Thrift Shoppe • 717-768-3784

In the quaint village of White Horse, amidst the tranquility of Amish farms, shop two floors of upscale high-quality merchandise and treasures for the whole family. This hidden gem is your source for beautiful linens, lightly used clothing and shoes, brand name purses, jewelry, housewares, crystal, toys, books galore, and must-see vintage and antiques. The inventory changes literally every day. Come watch quilts being stitched by local groups in the Quilting Room. The store features a 50 cent clothing rack, a store-wide weekly half-price color tag sale, and select clothing is only \$1.00 on Saturdays. Hours are every Monday-Friday from 9:00am to 5:00pm, and Saturday 9:00am to 4:00pm. Shop in person and like them on Facebook for weekly specials. 2016 marks the 25th year of this shoppe. The



Country Gift & Thrift Shoppe



On Route 340 in Village of White Horse
5602 Old Philadelphia Pike, Gap 17527
717-768-3784
www.countrygiftandthrift.com



Ephrata Re-Uzit Shop



On the Square in Downtown Ephrata
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717-733-4982
Mon-Fri 9-5 • Sat 9-4 • Closed Sun

shoppe's staff and volunteers are grateful that God has greatly blessed them so that they are able to reach out to the local community as well as those in need around the world. www.countrygiftandthrift.com.

Ephrata Re-Uzit Clothing & Housewares

• 717.733.4982 The small-town of Ephrata embodies the best of small town Amish Country. There is plenty to do in this venerated borough, including some excellent thrift shop bargain-browsing. The Ephrata Re-Uzit shop is located right beside the old train station, now the town's visitor center, with plenty of free public parking, including hitching rails for buggies, since the local Amish & Mennonite communities enjoy shopping here, too. With one of the thrift shop network's widest selections of clothing, this store offers a fine way to clothe the kids, mom, dad, friends, family, and even grandma and grandpa. There is also plenty of glassware and kitchen items, plus a well-stocked toy corner full of dolls, trucks, puzzles, and plush items.

Ephrata Re-Uzit Furniture & Books •

717.733.4934 Also on State Street at the south edge of Ephrata is a furniture and book warehouse not to be missed. Luxurious used leather couches and sectionals are available at fantastic prices, while a large selection of wooden furniture like hutches, dining room sets, desks, and end tables are on display



**Ephrata
Re-Uzit
Furniture &
Books**




On State Street Just South of Ephrata
1054 S. State St. Ephrata
717-733-4934
Mon-Thur 9-5 • Fri 9-8 • Sat 9-4 • Closed Sun

beside an impressive variety of upholstered choices. Sharing space in this store is also an extensive selection of books and other media. Locals and visitors alike love that every purchase helps support disaster relief around the Country and the world. The easiest way to reach this store is to head North on Route 272 from Lancaster, taking State Street at the Y (use the Wendy's as a landmark), and turning right into the parking lot of the store directly after turning onto State Street.

Re-Uzit Shop of New Holland •

717.354.8355 At the intersection of Route 23 and Shirk Road in New Holland is a very special thrift shop. It started in 1976 and was the first MCC Thrift Shop in Lancaster County. This is one of the largest thrift shops in the entire MCC-supporting network. Retail space alone accounts for 26,000 square feet of items on display, with the entire building occupying 40,000 square feet! There is plenty of furniture, clothing, crafts, gifts, decorations, small kitchen appliances, dishware, hardware, antiques, collectibles, and lamps available in this multifloor shopper's delight. This store has selected items for half price every week based on the color of the price tag. In addition, there is a section for 50 cent clothing. Known for a bright, clean atmosphere with friendly, helpful staff, this Re-Uzit offers shoppers a fine way to spend an afternoon in Amish Country. www.newhollandreuzit.org

Morgantown Re-Uzit Shoppe •

610.286.7233 Morgantown is often considered the gateway to Amish Country from the east. It is an easy hop and skip off the PA Turnpike, the first welcome to Amish Country many visitors see, and can be easily reached from Berks, Chester, and Lancaster Counties. On Rt. 23 just west of Morgantown stands a Re-Uzit shop full of thrifty and useful finds. This store has everything for daily life's necessities. Apparel, décor, home goods, toys, gifts – shop here before you go to a regular retail store. You'll probably find what you're looking for, save money, and support a worthy cause all at the same time. A great collection of vintage collectibles and antiques is a fun bonus. "Like" the store on Facebook to see more photos, specials, hours and directions.

The Main Street Closet • 717.464.2038

Main Street Closet is 5 minutes south of Lancaster at 2842 N. Willow Street Pike in Willow Street, PA. The shop has been at this new location since April of 2013 and is growing by leaps and bounds. The inventory changes daily with a large assortment of housewares, vintage items, collectibles, glassware, tools, books, shoes, games, puzzles, linens and a huge variety of clothing for the entire family. Every week items with a different color price tag go on sale at half price throughout the store. You are





Five Minutes South of Willow Valley Resort
2842 Willow Street Pike, Willow Street PA
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**MORGANTOWN
Re-Uzit Shoppe**



Just West of Morgantown on Route 23
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Mon-Fri 9-5 • Sat 9-3 • Closed Sun



Re-Uzit Shop
of New Holland, Inc.



At the intersection of Rte 23 & Shirk Rd.
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sure to find that special something to add to your collection, a craft item you have been looking for, a cute outfit for one of the kids and even something for yourself or your spouse. Check out this fun store and see what treasure you might find! From Lancaster take Route 272 south. Turn left on the second road past Kendig Square shopping mall, which is West Willow Rd. Proceed several blocks

to the corner of West Willow and 272N. If traveling north on 272, turn left onto West Willow Rd to enter the parking lot. With items on display at the various stores always changing, stop in at one or more of them and remember that you are not only helping yourself to quality merchandise at a fair price, but helping other folks in need at the same time. www.mainstreetcloset.org

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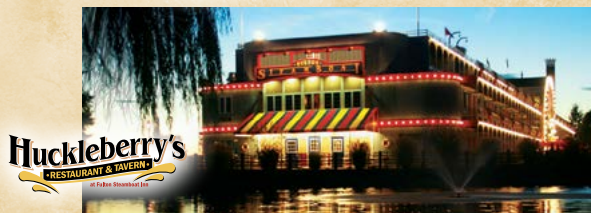
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"A Christmas Journey" is Victorian Magic... Magic of the Lantern!

By Lars Sloan

Last week as I opened my mail, I noticed an unusual envelope from the Amish Experience. Located on Route 340 near Bird-In-Hand, the Amish Experience is well known for their Amish tours, as well as their Official Heritage Amish house and one room school, and their critically acclaimed special effects production called "Jacob's Choice."

This mailer though had nothing to do with any of those offerings. This was about a show called "The Magic Lantern." Intrigued, I opened it. Inside was an invitation for this writer to see their newest theatrical endeavor, the Magic Lantern Show, or more specifically the Christmas show, "A Christmas Journey."

I was curious to see the show since I knew this was its second year, and I had not been able to see it last year. I had heard great things about the show, but like any good reviewer, I remained skeptical. I had no idea what a Magic Lantern was, or anything about its

history, so I decided to do some research before I went to see this show.

The Magic Lantern was the grandfather, if you will, to the movies, with images projected onto a big screen. Then there was a live "Showman" who performed or narrated the story while the images were on the screen. Back then there was usually music as well. It seems that during the 1800's these shows were one of the most popular forms of entertainment available. Literally every day there would be hundreds, if not thousands of Magic Lantern shows happening all over the world. There were even shows for thousands of people at one time!

I was surprised to discover that I knew nothing about this. It seems that the Magic Lantern basically disappeared in the early

1900's as motion pictures became popular.

Like cassette tapes giving way to CDs, or VHS tapes going the way of the dodo in favor of DVDs, the Magic Lantern couldn't hold on as silent movies began to take over.

So to learn that here in Lancaster, Pennsylvania there was not only a Magic Lantern Show, but a full time, permanent Magic Lantern Theater...well, I was intrigued. So I made plans to attend the advance presentation of this show.

Arriving at the theater, I noticed that there was plenty of free parking available. Also, the Plain & Fancy Farm Restaurant is right next door... good to know if you want to eat before the show. As I went inside, I was greeted by

Continued on Page 14



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Also open January 14-16, Feb. 18-20.

THEATER TICKETS GOOD THROUGH 2017

SEE BACK COVER FOR MORE INFO!

The Magic of the Lantern

(Continued from Page 13)

some beautiful Holiday decorations courtesy of the National Christmas Center. Also in the lobby is a quaint little gift shop, perfect for some special Christmas presents.

And there standing in the lobby was our Showman, greeting everyone who came in! Dressed in Victorian clothing with a top hat, Professor Phineas T. Firefly was the epitome of what I imagined a Magic Lantern Showman would be. Friendly and welcoming, he was always smiling and willing to pose for photographs as well.

As we entered the theater, I noticed an interesting mixture of Amish farm meets Christmastime. The theater was primarily decorated for the wonderful “Jacob’s Choice,” so the surroundings gave the look of being on an Amish farm, including laundry hanging from a line!

But in the middle of the theater was a stunning Victorian cabinet with an equally magnificent triennial Magic Lantern perched on top. And at the front of the theater there was a huge wreath hung on the “silo,” a lighted garland across the front, and a lovely Christmas tree with old fashioned ornaments. Quite a beautiful sight! And in the background Christmas music played,

from simple melodies to the most fully orchestrated carols.

Then with little fanfare, Professor Firefly was introduced and the show began. Right from the beginning it was obvious that the good Professor knew what he was doing. Interacting with each audience member as he found out where they were from and then making comments to each one, he held his audience in the palm of his hand.

He then “discovered” a stocking hanging in the middle of the wreath with a message from Santa! In the message, Santa called into question whether or not we, the audience, had the Christmas Spirit. And so the good Professor was tasked to ask fun Christmas trivia questions. When someone got the question right, a prize was awarded. It was a humorous and involving way to start the show.

Then the real magic began....no pun intended. The Professor took his place behind the Lantern and, as the lights dimmed, we were taken back in time to a simpler period when the hustle and bustle of our modern world had not yet intruded.

The show began with a wonderful rendition of “’Twas The Night Before Christmas” that brought new life to this familiar poem. It finished with a slide that you have to see to believe! Suffice it to say it brought the house down.

The show then moved to a new segment for this year, the early Charles Dickens Christmas story called “The Story of the Goblins Who Stole a Sexton.” Using recently acquired rare antique slides from England, this little-known story (which has some recognizable similarities to “A Christmas Carol”) enchanted everyone. It had wonderful visual effects and at times brought a tear or two to this writer’s eyes.

We then progressed through more stories, animated toy slides, the Birth of Christ, and a humorous story called “The Runaway Snowball.” The ebb and flow of the show was amazing, filling the audience with laughter and then with thoughtful reflection on the dramatic elements as well.

And finally the old chestnut, “A Christmas Carol” was presented. I thought I had experienced that story in just about every possible presentation... from dramatic reading to musical to even a version with puppets. But this was a tour de force! Professor Firefly told the story as if he had written it, and as it would have been experienced when it was written. With passion, humor and many different character voices, he took us on a journey that made it all seem new again. As I said, I’ve experienced “A Christmas Carol” in many ways, and this was probably the most memorable performance of all.

All too soon, the show was over. Time had indeed flown by. Then the good Professor took questions about the show, the Magic Lantern, and its history. It was fascinating to say the least.

As I left the theater and headed home, I was no longer skeptical. I was a true believer! The Magic Lantern is an experience not to be missed and the Holiday show, “A Christmas Journey,” is something I will see year after year. It deserves to be a family tradition.

“A Christmas Journey” Magic Lantern Show tickets can be purchased online at www.magiclanterntheater.com or by phone at 717-768-8400 ext. 210. Adult tickets are \$16.95, Child (ages 4-12) tickets are \$11.95. Shows are at 2:00PM and 7:00PM according to the following schedule, Nov. 25 and 26, Dec. 3, 10 and 17, and daily December 20 through 30 (No 7:00PM show Christmas Eve. No shows Christmas Day). And finally, December 31 – 2:00PM show ONLY. A specially priced Combo Package with the National Christmas Center is also available. The Theater is located at Plain & Fancy Farm, halfway between Bird-in-Hand and Intercourse on Route 340. GPS directions, 3121 Old Philadelphia Pike, Ronks PA, 17572. 



By Clinton Martin

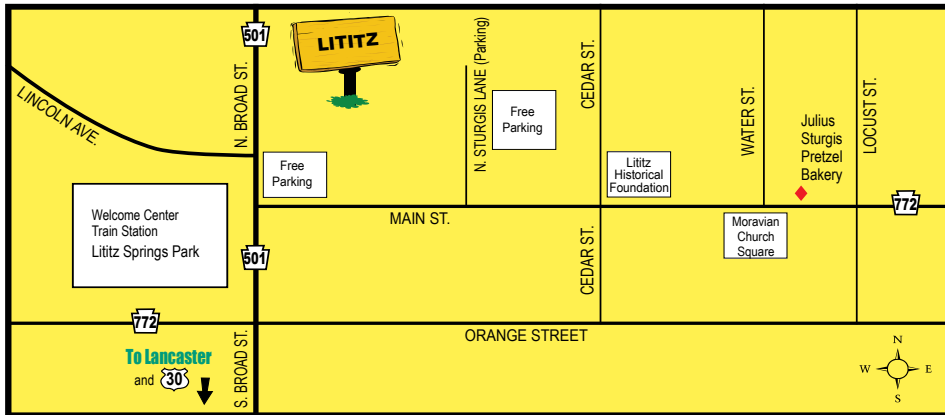
The Choo Choo Barn is open every day, except November 25 and 26, when (in just two days) the Groff family transforms the entire Choo Choo Barn layout into a Christmas winter wonderland. The Choo Choo Barn has been family owned and operated by the Groff family in Strasburg for going on four generations, and Christmastime has always been one of the most magical times of year to take in this undeniable work of art miniature train layout.

Among the trimmings on the layout, 54 miniature Santas (one for each year Choo Choo Barn has been open) are hidden

throughout the winding rails and cascading topography of the Choo Choo world. Some are easy to spot, like the Santa that flies with his sleigh above the 1,700 square foot display, but others require a keen eye and a sleuthing gaze.

The entire layout is brought to life by 150 hand-built animations and 22 moving trains. The Choo Choo Barn at 226 Gap Road (Rt.741 East) is open for the Christmas season seven days a week through December 31st, closing only for Christmas Day 12/25, and is open again January 2-3, 9-10, and 15-18. Call (717) 687-7911 or click www.choochoobarn.com. 

Historic Lititz • A Hometown Treasure



There really is no place quite like Lititz, and visitors should plan time there while in Amish Country. The Lititz story is tied to that of the Moravian faith in Bohemia. As was the case with other persecuted religious groups in Europe, many Moravians sought freedom in the New World, arriving in the early 1700's, with settlements in Pennsylvania and North Carolina. In 1755 the town actually took the name Lititz, the German spelling for Lidice, where European reformers had taken refuge in the 15th century.

Music and education were important to the Moravians. In fact, the Lititz schoolhouse

erected in 1746 marked the beginnings of what was to be Linden Hall, the oldest continuously operating residence school for girls in the United States.

For one hundred years, Moravian church members were the only people permitted to live in the town. It was not until 1855 that non-Moravians were allowed to own their own homes. The complex of buildings comprising the Moravian congregation is well worth seeing, particularly the church built in 1787.

One name is linked forever with the history of Lititz—Julius Sturgis. He opened the first



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commercial pretzel bakery in the New World in Lititz. The year was 1861, and the site at 219 East Main Street is on the National Register of Historic Places. A tour of the bakery, still in operation, is unlike any other and well worth your time. ~~50¢~~

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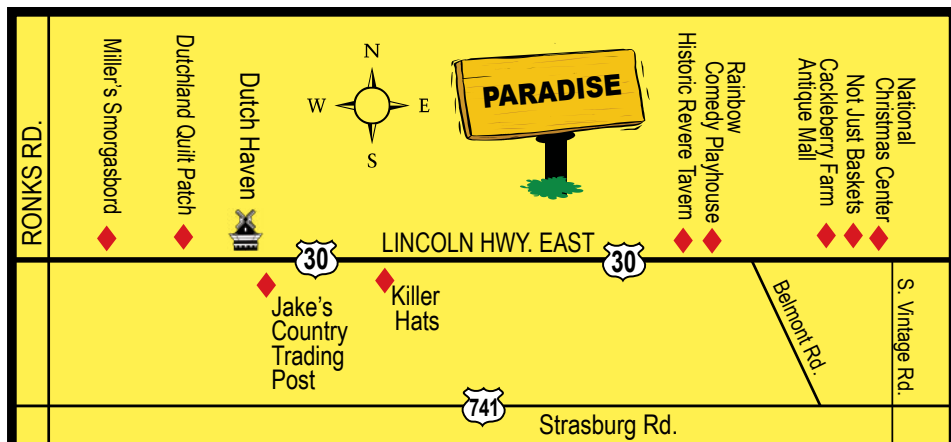


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Welcome to Our Paradise

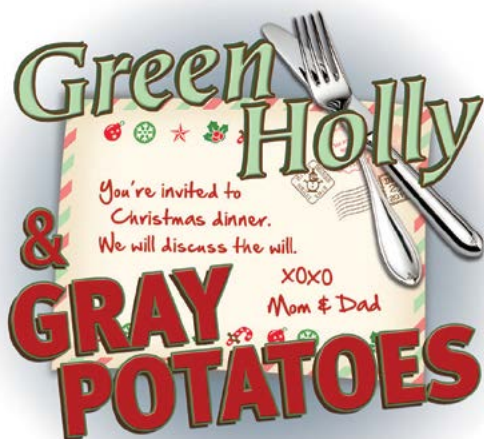


Visitors to Lancaster from the east on Route 30 travel through Paradise. The town's story traces back to Europe over 300 years ago, to the area of the Palatinate in Germany where Protestants had settled following the declaration of King Louis XIV that all Protestants in France would be persecuted. Fearing a French invasion, many accepted the invitation to settle in the New World in William Penn's colony of Penn's Woods. By 1712, they had secured land in Lancaster's Pequea Valley as

the area's first white people, living peaceably with local Indians.

The origins of Route 30, also known as "Lincoln Highway," date back to Lancaster's Colonial days when the frontier county needed a highway to connect it with the provincial capital of Philadelphia. The first road that was constructed is now Route 340, still referred to as the "Old Philadelphia Pike." Soon, it was apparent that this road was insufficient to handle the increasing traffic, and in 1790, a commission to survey a new route was

created. Since the cost was too much for the state to undertake, the company charged with building it was given the power to demand "reasonable" tolls from users. Investors received dividends earned from tolls collected along the gates of the turnpike. (As the toll was paid, the gate or "pike" was turned, hence the term "turnpike"). The "Lincoln Highway" (Route 30) opened in 1795 as the first long-distance, hard surfaced road in the country. Taverns and stagecoach stops grew up along the turnpike for weary travelers. Of these, the Revere Tavern, dating back to 1740 and originally called the "Sign of the Spread Eagle," still proudly stands today. In 1841, the tavern became the residence of Reverend Edward V. Buchanan and his wife Eliza Foster Buchanan. Eliza was the sister of Stephen Foster, whose immortal songs will always be a part of Americana. Foster not only penned music at the tavern, but sent many of his manuscripts to Eliza, also a talented musician, for her approval. On the banks of the Pequea Creek, Eliza and Stephen played many of Stephen's 200 songs, including "Way Down Upon the Swanee River" and "Oh! Susanna." Wherever you happen to call "paradise," we hope that a little bit of our own Paradise won't do you any harm! 



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Plan Now to Enjoy QuiltWeek Lancaster 2017

By Clinton Martin



Attending QuiltWeek is more than a thimbleful of joy. It is a fantastic world of quilts and quilted art that ranges from stately traditional, to wildly exotic. QuiltWeek is the annual quilt and craft exhibition staged by the American Quilter's Society.

Over 200 quilts in juried competition are on display, wooing both the judges and the general public with gorgeous, creative, and evocative designs. A huge merchant mall offers anything to do with crafting and quilting, books to machines, threads to fabric. Classes with expert, renowned artists are offered throughout the multiple day event, and of course there are hundreds of quilts on display.

But, each year there are special exhibits to enrich attendees. 2017 boasts fascinating editions of these popular themes: *New Quilts From an Old Favorite: New York Beauty* from The National Quilt Museum, *Cherrywood Challenge 2016: The Lion King*, *25th Anniversary Contest: The Gala of the Unexpected* from The National Quilt Museum, *SAQA: Made in Europe*, and *Focus & Fiber: Quilts by Melissa Sobotka*.



QuiltWeek takes place at the Lancaster County Convention Center from March 29 – April 1, 2017. Add the event to your calendar now, and visit www.quiltweek.com for tickets, class registration and lodging information.

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In Beautiful Paradise Lancaster County Pennsylvania

Shopping with and for style in Amish Country

(Continued from Page 7)

shelves include many items that you simply don't find elsewhere, like old-fashioned hand-held kitchen wares, stunning yet simple glassware, toys and children's books, and one of the best selections of harmonicas you'll find anywhere. Country Housewares is also one of the area's retailers of the musical wall-clocks that are so popular in Amish Country.

Country Housewares Store—717-556-0985

Annie and Eli Stoltzfus welcome visitors to their road-side stand for everything from locally made quilts and crafts to the area's best soft pretzels, and canned and baked goods too. The stand has grown from humble beginnings to a full-fledged brick and mortar store, but there are still animals in the meadow, wide open farm fields surrounding the shop, and quite possibly the most delicious homemade root beer you'll find in Amish Country.

Countryside Road Stand—717-656-9206

Not far from the village of Intercourse, the Esh family farm has been passed down through four generations. Jake and his family are happy to continue the legacy of dairy-farming, but the ladies of the household contribute in a big way to the family business through a quilt shop next to the barn. They have many quilts from twin to king size in stock, but are happy to sew a custom order to a customer's specifications.

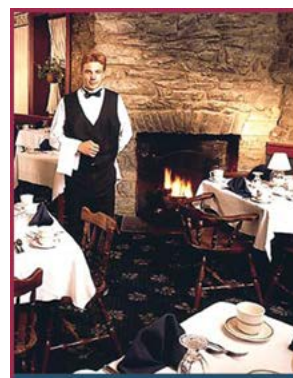
Esh Handmade Quilts—717-768-8435

I hesitate to give away the location of one of my favorite shops in Amish Country. It is a quiet and quaint bookstore with lots of paper goods and supplies to boot. But this is quite simply where anyone who is interested in Amish-themed literature must go. They have the popular "bonnet fiction" novels by Beverly Lewis, Wanda Brunstetter and others, but they also have farmers' almanacs, devotional titles, and even a few old-time German prints too. Just drive south down Old Leacock Road, off of Route 340 between Bird-in-Hand and Intercourse, and look for the bookstore off to the left.

Gordonville Bookstore—717-768-3512

Jesse is the J in J&B and the B honors the memory of family matriarch Barbara. It is a well-stocked shop in the basement of the home. The shopkeepers graciously welcome all visitors who come in to see the beautifully hand-made Amish crafts and quilts. Old-fashioned wooden pull-toys are classic examples of days gone by, while the

Continued on Page 19




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Shopping with and for style in Amish Country

(Continued from Page 18)

doll and baby-sized Amish clothes are sweet and tender reminders of simpler times.

J&B Quilts & Crafts-717-327-0707

Handmade solid wood toys made by John and Amos Lapp (among other family members) are a real treat at this shop, showing that old-fashioned toys have not gone away, they've only become more nostalgic. Creative play and imaginative worlds are easy for kids to conjure up when playing with some of the fascinating toys and children's furniture available at Lapp's Toys. Marble rollers from basic to quite complex are only the beginning at this colorful store.

Lapp's Toys & Furniture-717-945-5366

A country store is self-explanatory enough, but don't pass this place by if you think you've had your fill of crafts. Henry and Linda Stoltzfus and family have filled their farm's store with unique crafted items, like hand-worked leather craft, quilted books and potholders, as well as framed country art prints. Henry has a woodshop on site where he produces rustic country décor. But the real highlight is the miniature horses they raise. The barn is free for you to enter and enjoy the horses, and you'll notice each one has a name plate on the front of its pen. Awww...

Li'l Country Store & Mini Horse Farm-717-687-8237

This is the farm you might see on a few postcards. It is a beautiful Amish farm nestled among slowly rolling hills, and sports not only one of the more serene views in Amish Country, but one of the largest quilt and craft shops as well. The shop is a mortise and tendon barn structure with lots of pillows, quillows, chimes and many more gift items. Most visitors go to see the farm, and linger to shop in the well-appointed store.

Riehl's Quilts & Crafts-717-656-0697

Up the hill and over the dale, you'll find Smucker's Quilts down the farm lane at this Amish family's farm. Rachel Smucker enjoys quilting, so working in her quilt shop is a welcoming vocation. She is often quilting, so expect to see quilts in various stages of production when you visit. The shop is a stand-alone building next to the barn and house, so every square inch is used to show a wonderful variety of quilted items. Custom quilt orders are welcome, and are shipped to your home promptly by UPS or a similar service.

Smucker's Quilts-717-656-8730

Continued on Page 21

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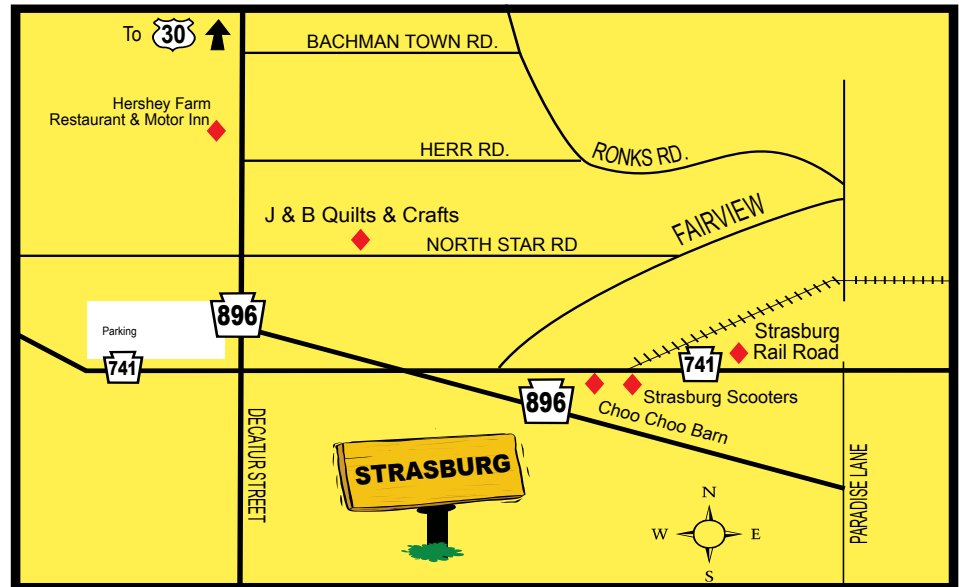
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Strasburg - A Town of Trains & Heritage

All aboard! Strasburg is a destination all its own in Dutch Country, home to many well known attractions. To name just a few --- the Strasburg Rail Road, Ghost Tours of Lancaster, National Toy Train Museum, and the Choo Choo Barn. But you may not know much about the interesting history of "Train Town." Strasburg, named for the city in France, was actually "founded" by a Frenchman, Pierre Bezaillon, who traded with the Delaware Indians. The story goes he came to the area in 1693, as French fur traders opened up the first path through this area from Philadelphia to the Susquehanna River.

As early as 1716, when the first wagon was used for hauling goods, the path became known as the Conestoga Road, and the wagons that traveled them eventually became known as Conestoga Wagons. Main Street Strasburg was developed during the next half century as traffic on this road increased considerably and the first log houses appeared in the village about 1733.

Strasburg continued to flourish in the 18th century primarily because of its location along the major wagon routes between Philadelphia, Lancaster, and the Susquehanna River. As Strasburg flourished, so did its neighbor to the east, Philadelphia. The commercial interests of Philadelphia pressured the State Legislature to improve the transportation network into their city. As a result, a series of canals along with the Philadelphia and Columbia Rail Roads were



constructed. Strasburg residents became alarmed at the possibility of losing their commercial position and there soon emerged a charter for the Strasburg Rail Road to construct a rail line connecting Strasburg with the Philadelphia and Columbia Rail Road main line near Paradise. Finally in the 1850's, trains were hauling freight and passengers.

About 100 years later, business had dwindled, and a severe storm in 1957 destroyed much of the track. It seemed the SRR had reached the end of the line. To the rescue came a group

of local train enthusiasts who began bringing the SRR back to life in a totally new way. They added passenger cars and buildings, and today's Strasburg Rail Road was born, destined to become one of Dutch Country's top attractions.

Appropriately enough, the State decided to build an expanded Rail Road Museum of Pennsylvania across the street, the ideal place to preserve the history of railroading in Pennsylvania. With the other train attractions nearby, it's little wonder that Strasburg has earned the title of Train Town! 🚂

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Shopping with and for style in Amish Country

(Continued from Page 19)

The owner of what is quite possibly the county's longest-running quilt shop, Emma Witmer, has been matching visitors with their dream quilts for over 40 years. Her shop often has a quilt or two waving in the breeze on the wash-line along the road, but don't let those quilts monopolize your time. There are at least a hundred intricate designs inside the shop, and Emma will gladly explain to you the name and inspiration behind each. She has even been credited with having invented a few of the stitch patterns.

Witmer Quilt Shop • 717-656-9526

From the Past

The historical and traditional nature of Amish Country makes it fertile ground for antique collectors, so keep your eyes open for estate sales, barn auctions, and yard sales. But a steadier antique and collectible dig is only steps away.

On Route 30 near the village of Paradise, Cackleberry Farm Antique Mall offers a huge selection of vintage items, including a fun 1950s diner display, and a fully stocked old-fashioned five-and-dime general store exhibit.

In Adamstown (you might have wondered when I would get to "Antiques Capital, USA") you'll find Renninger's Antique Market, which was recently featured on Reality TV in a picker's show.

Continued on Page 22



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Showroom at Gish's Furniture.

Building furniture fits in well with Amish Country ideals, like a good day's work, time-tested methods, and generational skills handed down from father to son.

Blue Ridge Furniture is a prime example of a multi-generational furniture business, making what they sell, and showing it only yards from the factory at their showroom in the village of Churchtown.

Located at the Shady Maple Complex, Country Home Furniture is a gallery of hand-picked Amish furniture-makers, bringing together not only hard-wood furniture, but artfully upholstered locally made sofas, loveseats, easy-chairs, and daybeds.

Showcasing the best of Ohio and Lancaster Amish woodcraft, Gish's Furniture along Route 30 proves that this retail-heavy mile still boasts local family-owned shops, if you know where to look. Their dining room sets are especially grand, and the exclusive finishing process they use creates a uniquely stain and spill resistant surface.

Blue Ridge Furniture—717-445-6595

Country Home Furniture—717-354-2329

Gish's Furniture—717-392-6080

From Specialty Retailers

The unique, the interesting, and the special are contained smartly in Amish Country at a number of local boutiques. The largest-of-its-kind shop, Country Knives, is an amazing cutlery store just a few miles east of Intercourse. Country Knives carries thousands of knives, but also handles just about anything that has a sharp edge. Shears, machetes, scissors, razors, and even butcher blocks are part of what makes Country Knives one of the world's largest selections of knives under one roof.

Ladies, gentlemen, bikers, and scoundrels may find shopping for clothing at Wal-Mart a sin, so to Amish Country they must go. Killer Hats offers dozens of ways to top

Continued on Page 32

Gigantic Model Train Layout

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Shopping with and for style in Amish Country

(Continued from Page 21)

And for the specific man-cave collector, there is Sam's Man Cave, a bar-sign and beer-stein haven with lots of tins, tubs, taps, and caps for the breweriana aficionado.

Cackleberry Farm Antique Mall—215-721-7497

Renninger's Antique Market—717-336-2177

Sam's Man Cave—717-394-6404

From the Cloth

If you'd rather sew your family's next heirloom yourself, rather than look for one at the local antique shop, then lend your ear, as Amish Country is home to a quilting state of mind unlike nearly any other part of the U.S. Along the main routes of 340 and 30,

Dutchland Quilt Patch offers two locations to supply the sewing or crafting enthusiast with finished quilts for sale as well as fabric, batting, thread and thimbles.

The New Holland Re-Uzit Shop is also a must for fabric shoppers, since they offer great bargains on anything from housewares and clothing, to a surprisingly large selection of fabric.

Dutchland Quilt Patch—717-687-0534

New Holland Re-Uzit Shop—717-354-8355

From the Forest

What's a sewing nook without a fully stocked sewing table? Well, Amish Country has many furniture shops that create museum-quality pieces for any room in the home, or business for that matter. A few of the pieces at the *Amish Country News* headquarters are authentic Lancaster County Amish-made solid-wood furniture, and we're pretty sure they'll outlast all of us.

Myths About the Amish

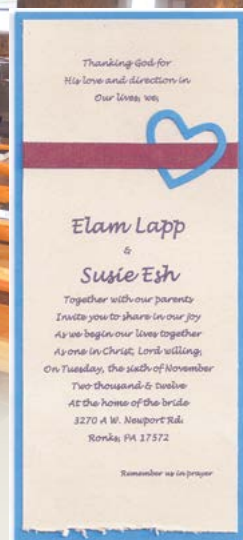
by Brad Igou

Over the years, and even more so today with the proliferation of “reality Amish themed TV shows,” there have been many misconceptions spread about the Amish. These often go beyond stereotypes, to outright lies, with one of the most unfortunate examples being the outrageous (but popular) “Amish Mafia” series. Admittedly, some viewers watch such shows for their entertainment value, but others actually believe much of what they see. Bottom line --- such shows make it difficult to separate fact from fiction.

In this series, we deal with several of the more understandable misconceptions about the Amish, many of which may have some truth to them, and try to provide a more balanced explanation. The reader should keep in mind that Amish customs vary a great deal across the USA, and much of what follows is focused on the Lancaster settlement, the oldest in the Nation.

Benches, hymnbooks, and chairs ready for wedding service.

(Photo: Stapleton)



A wedding invitation.
(Photo: Igou)

“The Blue Gate”

November and December are the main months for Amish weddings in Lancaster County. Tuesdays and Thursdays are the days for these church services, and you know it is the busy “wedding season” when you see the many “postings” of marriage dates appearing in the local newspapers. I have spoken to some Amish who have gone to three weddings in one day, a possibility since these are day-long celebrations, with perhaps 300 or more people in attendance.



Wedding foods arrive in bench wagon.
(Photo: Stapleton)

At this time of year, therefore, it seems appropriate to look at one of the most famous (and incorrect) myths about the Amish, that of the “Blue Gate.” The story goes that when an Amishman has a daughter eligible for marriage, its “announced” by his painting the gate blue. But drive through the countryside as much as you wish, and you’ll probably never see a blue gate on an Amish farm.

Perhaps the earliest known printed reference to this story was in the February, 1937 issue of *Esquire* magazine. In that same year, Berenice Steinfeldt wrote in her booklet *The Amish of Lancaster County* that “the

sign of a blue painted gate grew to be the advertising sign of an Amish daughter ready to marry.”

More recently, a box of notecards for sale locally showed an Amish boy and girl by a blue gate, with the following caption...

*“When a Dutch girl feels fer courtin’,
(At least they say it’s true),
Her Pop chust takes a can of paint,
And makes the front gate blue!”*

How did this tale get started? According to Steinfeldt, the blue gate story originated around the turn of the century when a trolley ran east from downtown Lancaster along the Lincoln Highway, now Route 30. A well-known Amish bishop lived on the road, and he often received visitors from many areas. At the bishop’s house there was a blue gate and, since this was the simplest way to spot his home, people were told to tell the trolley conductor to drop them off “at the blue gate.” Apparently the reason the gate was blue was because the bishop was fond of the color.

Amish historian David Luthy, in discussing the blue gate myth, refers to a 1980 letter from a Lancaster Amishman, which seems to support this explanation. In it the writer noted that in the old days people had picket

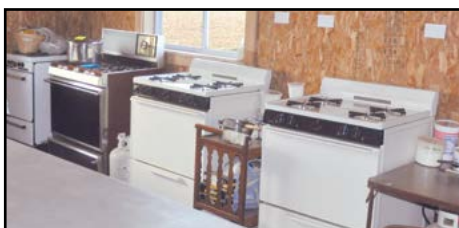
fences around their yards and gardens, and these fences were often whitewashed every spring. He felt the gate might have been painted blue so dirt wouldn’t show as much, since the gate was handled more than the rest of the fence. He writes...

Yes, some Amish did paint their gates blue, and our Bishop Benjamin F. Beiler had a blue gate probably longer than most people. When people came from the West and didn’t know where to go, they were told to take the Coatesville trolley and get off at the blue gate, which of course was the Bishop’s.

Today there is a roadside stand on Route 30, and a sign marking it as the “Blue Gate Farm.” Is there a blue gate there today? No, I’m afraid not. But the farm, I should note, is an excellent place to stop and get baked goods and farm fresh vegetables in season.



Decorated buggy and bench wagon. (Photo: Zerr)



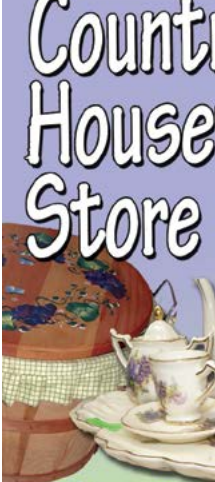
Cooking kitchen ready for wedding meal.
(Photo: Stapleton)

So, I hope we have put this story to rest. But if you do find a blue gate on an Amish farm, be sure to take a photo and let me know. I haven’t seen one yet, but there seem to be plenty of Amish weddings taking place this year! 

The map shows the Leola, Pennsylvania area. A horizontal line represents Main Street, and a vertical line represents Railroad Ave. To the left of Railroad Ave, Main Street is labeled 'MAIN STREET'. To the right, it is labeled 'RAILROAD AVE.'. A black dot on Main Street, to the right of Railroad Ave, marks the location of the Leola Community Center. Roads shown include N. Groffdale Rd, S. Groffdale Rd, E. Eby Road, Voynville Rd, and Peters Road. Businesses marked with red diamonds include Rieh's Quilts & Crafts, Witmer's Quilt Shop, Smucker's Quilts, Country Home Furniture, and Blue Ridge Furniture. Landmarks include the Leola sign, New Holland sign, and Blue Ball sign. A north arrow points towards the top right, labeled 'To Ephrata'.

This entire century had been one of continued misery for the peasants of the Palatinate

This was no small matter when the alternative was indentured service for a period of years. For adults, indenture frequently meant four to seven years of labor without pay. Minors served until their 21st birthday. But still, William Penn's Quaker Pennsylvania was liberation compared to the Europe they fled seeking freedom of religion, assembly and speech for all, hopefully, none of which we take for granted today. 



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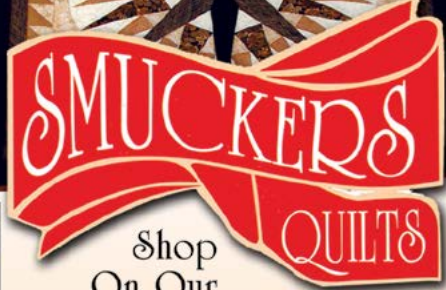
buffet, or cabinet, pie safe, etc. to complete a wonderfully comfortable and sleek “nook” where everyone in the family will want to enjoy their meals. Country Home Furniture

is located at the world-famous Shady Maple Complex. Open every day except Sundays. Call 800-474-7916 or visit 1352 Main Street, East Earl, PA 17519. 

Tilling the soil appeals to many Amish, but the call of the saw draws others out of the fields and into the workshop, creating handmade treasures hewn of lumber and crafted with care. This is a vocation as revered by the Amish as agriculture, and indeed the reputation for handmade, solid wood, Amish furniture has spread far and wide. Indeed, Lancaster County boasts nearly 7,800 cabinet makers!

Country Home Furniture is one of the trusted retailers these Amish craftsmen choose to showcase their work, and the store’s showroom is full of a wide range of furniture styles, both upholstered and not, modern to rustic. A full line of custom options allows customers to choose every aspect of their piece, down to individual wood species, hardware addendums, and finish to feel.

Country Home exclusives, like their “Dinette Program,” allow customers to bundle together furniture pieces at great savings. Dinettes in various styles and finishes offer customers at minimum a fine table, chairs, and sideboard,



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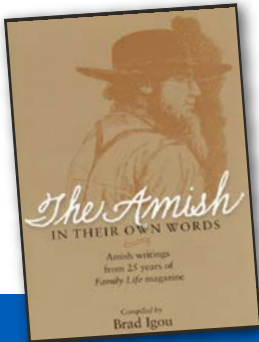
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BISMOLINE --- Long and Soothing Comfort from an Amish Pantry

By Clinton Martin



Why do the Amish seem to know some of the best home remedies for minor ailments? Part of that is explained by a desire to prevent unnecessary (expensive) doctor visits, but some of it might just be nostalgia we English assign to our Plain neighbors.

Whatever the reason what the Amish choose is often what I use, when dealing with a minor problem. Such is the case with minor skin irritation, rashes, chafing, and other issues. The wonderful product that keeps my skin the most comfortable is Bismoline.

Bismoline Medicated Powder was created right here in Lancaster over 100 years ago, and is still headquartered here. It is a staple in Amish pantries, but is also beloved by "English" customers too. Reading the reviews on Amazon.com shows this product has transcended the local market to reach grateful customers nationwide. Every single review at press time was a five star (out of five) review, and they were all verified purchasers, some having been re-ordering for years.

While you can purchase Bismoline online, when you're in Amish Country, just pick it up where the Amish do: Kauffman's Fruit Farm & Market, 3097 Old Philadelphia Pike, Bird-in-Hand, next door to The Amish Experience at Plain and Fancy Farm on Route 340. 

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Cindy Woodsmall's Latest Amish Romance: The Angel of Forest Hill

By Clinton Martin

When Old Order Amish woman Rose Kurtz is asked to leave her family, travel deep

into West Virginia, and help Joel Diener with his children in the wake of tragedy, the quiet young woman recognizes a home where she might find kindness instead of criticism, hope replacing harsh words. She agrees to stay in Forest Hill and become Joel's wife for the sake of his family needs, but their marriage is to be a partnership, one built from need, not love and affection.

As the years pass, Rose continues to beckon Joel to join life again, to take joy in his growing children, and to awaken his heart

to the possibility of new love. Joel, too, hopes that Rose can move beyond deep-rooted hurts to see the beautiful Christmas ahead, their season—and Joel's longing for more than friendship. But will the arrival of a beautiful widow and a series of misunderstandings threaten to undo how far Rose and Joel have come?

Filled with deep emotion and the wonder of the season of Christ's birth, *The Angel of Forest Hill* invites readers to experience

an amazing journey toward love and belonging. An excerpt is available online at author Cindy Woodsmall's website, www.cindywoodsmall.com/the-angel-of-forest-hill, and is a truly engaging page out of the world of Rose Kurtz.

Readers can purchase the book at any number of online retailers, or here locally in Amish Country at Gordonville Bookstore, 275 Old Leacock Road, Gordonville, PA 17529. Call (717) 768-3512. 



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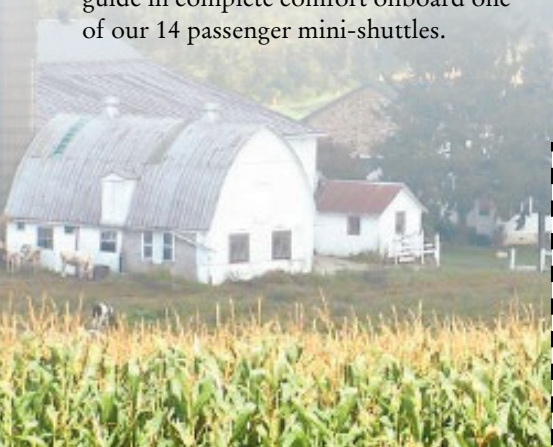
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Theater Shows on the Hour.

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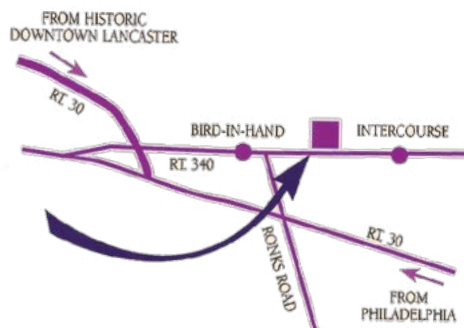
Theater Shows on the Hour

House & School at Quarter to the Hour

February 18-20

Theater Shows on the Hour

House & School: Tours at Quarter to the Hour

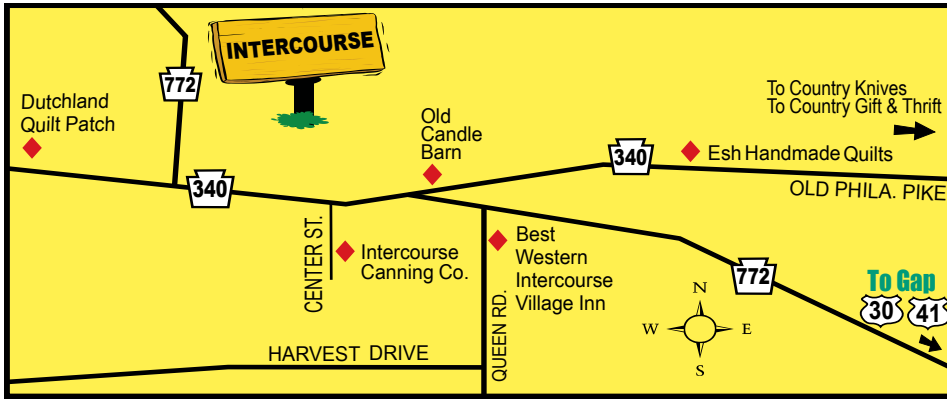


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Welcome to Intercourse PA



Perhaps no other town in the entire country can claim its fame on just one simple thing --- its name. Harrison Ford drove a buggy past the road sign on a memorable visit in the Hollywood blockbuster hit of the movie "Witness." For years people have postmarked "Intercourse" on envelopes, and the jokes from visitors who travel through Bird-in-Hand to Intercourse are endless. There are several theories for the name, but that which we find most plausible follows.

Around 1730, the Old Provincial Highway (now Route 340) was laid out to connect Philadelphia with Lancaster. Conestoga wagons hauled freight back and forth between the two cities. Providing rest for travelers and horses, taverns sprouted along the way,

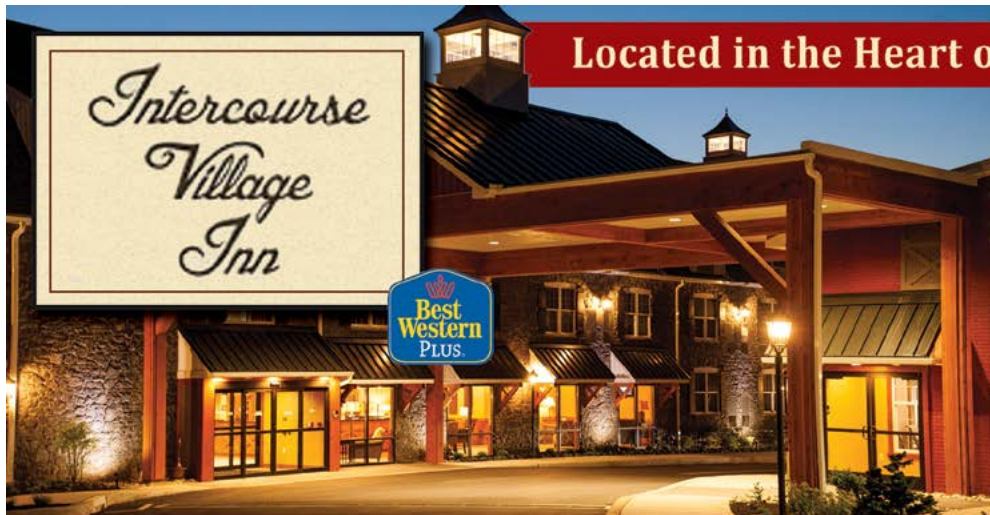
becoming centers for news, gossip, and commerce. The construction of a log tavern in 1754 at the intersection of Newport Road and the Highway took "Cross Keys" as its name.

It remained such until 1814, when the name was changed to Intercourse as part of a failed real estate scheme of a Mr. George Brungard, who had acquired 48 acres of nearby land and attempted to lay out a town site and divide it into sections for sale by a lottery, advertising "151 handsome building lots of \$250 each to be drawn for by number." Renaming the town made sense, as intercourse had a common usage referring to the pleasant mutual fellowship and frequent intermingling which were so common in the informal atmosphere of the quiet country village. Over

time, Brungard's scheme begat others. As recently as 1971, an enterprising soul tried to take advantage of the town's name by selling deeds for one-inch square plots of Intercourse to visitors. Creative, but nonetheless a failure. By 1880, Intercourse had a population of 280 with a post office that actually moved among stores or restaurants as owners hoped visits by residents would increase their business.

The local stagecoach service started around 1898 as "a single horse conveyance similar to a market wagon, with a roll-up curtain and double set of seats." When the stagecoach driver knew of passengers beforehand, their comfort on cold days was added to with the placement of hot bricks heated in the oven, and wrapped in newspaper to preserve their warmth.

As the days of the dirt road drew to a close, so too did the stagecoach era. In 1923 a transit company was organized and bus service initiated to and from Lancaster. While "many of the Amish residents of the area were eager to see the line started, they did not want to invest in stock of the Company. Instead they bought books of tickets which were really prepaid bus fares." Enough money was raised to buy a Mack Auto Bus for \$6,800. It held 25 passengers and even had solid rubber tires! Today Intercourse has been recognized as a "foodie" town by the Discover Lancaster Visitors Bureau. You'll soon discover why walking the streets of this tiny hamlet is an absolute must-visit for everyone. 



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800.717.6202 • intercoursevillageinn.com • 3610 E. Newport Rd. Intercourse, PA 17534



Huacaya Alpaca.... Warm, Cozy and Fashionable at Eastland Alpacas

By Clinton Martin

Eastland Alpacas doesn't always keep regular hours at their farm boutique, but during the holiday season there is a fantastic opportunity for visitors to enjoy the farm's exquisite selection, no "by chance" risk at this time of year!

Eastland Alpacas is a 30 acre farm less than eight miles from Spooky Nook Sports Complex. In addition to raising alpacas, the farm also has an on-site store stocked with hard to find items made from alpaca fiber - sweaters, scarves, hats, gloves, socks, sofa throws, and stuffed animals. Ranging from raw fiber to roving, and yarn from the farm's own animals, there is also a wide

color selection of authentic Peruvian yarns. Visitors of any age are welcome to visit the farm, the alpacas, and the farm store.

During the Open House, visitors can come, see, feed and even lead the Alpacas. Farm wagon rides are offered. A food stand benefitting a good cause dishes up good eats, the Alpacas show off traversing skillfully through an obstacle course, and of course the farm store itself is open with hundreds of wonderful gift items. Holiday Open House hours are November 5, 10:00am-4:00pm. November 6, 12:00pm-4:00pm, and November 12, 10:00am-4:00pm, November 13, 12:00pm-4:00pm. Regular store hours

continue November 14 through December 31, 2016. Monday through Saturday 10:00am-4:00pm. Sundays 1:00pm-4:00pm. For GPS directions, use 2089 Risser Mill Road, Mount Joy, PA. Call (717) 653-2757.

www.eastlandalpacas.com 

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December 2 & 3

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Visit us Mon-Sat 8-5
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3453 Old Philadelphia Pike
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Shop On-Line at www.DutchlandQuilts.com

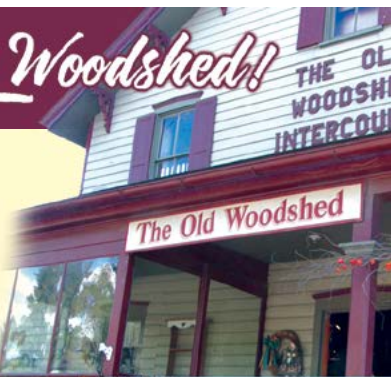
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Visit the oldest store in Intercourse. Built 1861.



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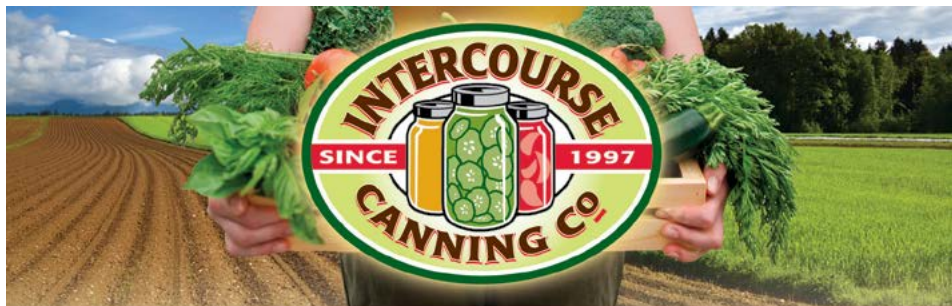
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13 Center Street Intercourse, PA • 717-768-0156 • intercoursecanning.com



Shopping with and for style in Amish Country

(Continued from Page 22)

one's noggin in extreme fashions, but also has a huge variety of other not-your-run-of-the-mill belts, buckles, chaps, and shirts.

Located close to the famous Spooky Nook Sports facility, Eastland Alpacas is a beautiful country farm that raises the funky livestock known for giving "a warm hug from nature." Alpacas give wool which can be used to make luxurious

scarves, sweaters, socks, hats, gloves, and coats, all these and much more are available at the Eastland Alpacas farm store.

Country Knives—717-768-3818

Killer Hats—866-443-7279

Eastland Alpacas—717-653-2757

From the Decorators

To make your house an Amish Country inspired home, there are many shops offering primitives, home décor, household embellishments, and seasonal accents for your four-walls-and-a-roof. Sporting not only some great merchandise, but occupying

this issue's cover story (see it on page 4 and 5), is Jake's Country Trading Post, an ever-growing store that ensures you can't ever say a country store is boring.

The Old Candle Barn, which grew from an Amish family making candles in their barn to the area's definitive authority on candles, is still dipping and pouring, but also carries plenty of additional primitive and rustic merchandise to match.

The Old Woodshed is known as the oldest continuously operating store in the village of Intercourse, and applies this great history to showcase a wonderful array of items in a store with charm, atmosphere, and personality. Locally handmade Amish straw hats are available here (not imported replicas, but the real-deal.)

Jake's Country Trading Post—

717-687-8980

Old Candle Barn—

717-768-3231

Old Woodshed—

717-768-3926

With this cornucopia of shopping options, you'll have to plan return trips to Amish Country. Our local merchants will welcome you time and time again to the heart of America's Garden Spot. The pick of the crop lies not only in the fields, but represents bargains, cherished treasures, and timeless heirlooms that can be found at so many of our Amish Country specialty stores. Happy Shopping and Happy Holidays!

Experience Lancaster's Most Christmassy Place – the National Christmas Center

By Caleb Bressler

When you step through the doors of the National Christmas Center, you find yourself literally surrounded by Christmas. Named by the Travel Channel as one of the most “Christmassy places in America,” Christmas is brought to life through one-after-another of twinkling walk-through exhibits and holiday memorabilia. The center is 20,000 square feet, and decked out for Christmas year-round. Begin your Christmas journey exploring “Christmas Around the World,” a life-sized exhibit displaying Christmas traditions the world over.

Before you come to the next room, you’ll find walking through the halls a Christmas adventure in and of itself. The walls are filled with images of Santa, and a glass case containing miniature Santa figurines. But the Christmas Emporium, filled with Christmas memories, has even more fond remembrances of Christmas Past.

Next, continue past displays of hundreds of items and tableaux showing Christmases long ago, including a re-creation of a Woolworth’s Five and Dime store, complete with display cases brimming with old-fashioned merchandise.

Stepping through a wreath doorway, you discover the “North Pole” beyond the Emporium, complete with “reindeer stables,” polar bears, elves, and Christmas trees. But you’ve really only just begun.

Continuing on, you discover Santa’s Workshop full of animatronics and toys. You’ll follow a storybook journey through the cobbled streets of Tudor Towne, marvel at a multi-storied model trainset, and even step back in time and to walk through Biblical Bethlehem to the Nativity.

If you are looking for a proper Christmas memento to take home as a reminder of your visit, make sure to peruse the Center’s special gift shop for unusual ornaments and other Holiday gift ideas.

The National Christmas Center is located at 3427 Lincoln Hwy East, Paradise PA 17562. Call (717) 442-7950 for additional information. www.nationalchristmascenter.com. Merry Christmas! 



The Good 'n Plenty Experience

Stop in at Good 'n Plenty today to enjoy our traditional Lancaster County home cooking and you'll see why we've been chosen as one of AAA's Top 10 BEST “down-home dining” restaurants in North America. Staffed with local cooks who have devoted years to preparing outstanding food, Good 'n Plenty is like no other restaurant in the heart of the Pennsylvania Dutch area.

Three Delicious Ways To Dine

Family Style Dining Our traditional all you can eat family style dining is our most popular dining option with all the food brought to the table by our experienced and friendly servers.

Menu Dining Our menu dining area is perfect for guests with a smaller appetite who would like to dine at individual tables. In addition to all the Pennsylvania Dutch favorites, our menu dining features fresh made soups, garden fresh salads and made to order sandwiches.



Takeout Want all the delicious food but no time to sit down? The Good 'n Plenty takeout program is ideal for people on the go.



Please visit goodnplenty.com for current serving hours and valuable coupons

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**Lancaster's Original
Amish Farm Feast**

Feast includes entrees, sides, starters, beverages and desserts & is valid for up to 6 adults.
Not valid Easter, Mother's Day, Thanksgiving or with any other offer, special, or group rate.
Expires 12/31/16. Not valid on ala carte menu. PLU 505

OR 10% off

Ala Carte Menu

Valid for up to 6 people (including children).
Not valid Easter, Mother's Day or Thanksgiving. Not valid on Amish Farm Feast.
Expires 12/31/16. Not valid on alcohol or with any other offer. Code: C'mon back



Where It All Began. Over 50 years ago, Plain & Fancy Farm opened to provide delicious, authentic Amish meals to visitors from all over the world, the first family-style restaurant in Lancaster County. Today Plain & Fancy is a destination all its own, featuring the acclaimed "Jacob's Choice" at the Amish Experience Theater, Amish Farmlands and Visit-in-Person Tours, the Heritage Site Amish House & One-Room School, and Aaron & Jessica's Buggy Rides. The onsite Country Store offers excellent country shopping, and the newest addition to the property, Amish View Inn & Suites, has a brand new extension with great views and luxurious lodging surrounded by stunning Amish countryside.

A Lancaster Original. Amos, Ben, Manny and Elmer are some of the Amish farmers who supply the restaurant with the farm-fresh produce it serves on a daily basis. Depending on the season, sweet corn, tomatoes, watermelon, cabbage, broccoli, squash, peppers and onions are all sourced from farms within a horse-and-buggy's drive. These neighbors, and the neighbors before them, have helped Plain & Fancy go "from farm to table" for over 50 years. The restaurant is AAA recommended, a PA Preferred and ServSafe award winner, and the Pennsylvania recipient of USA Today's Great Plate Award.

The Amish Farm Feast. Plain & Fancy Farm Restaurant is best known as Lancaster County's original family-style restaurant. The all-you-can-eat Amish Farm Feast includes your entrees, side dishes, starters, desserts and beverages. Enjoy fried chicken, roast beef, chicken pot pie, baked sausage, real mashed potatoes, buttered noodles, green and yellow string beans, sweet shoe peg corn, chow chow, cole slaw, raisin bread, rolls and apple butter, lemonade, iced tea, hot tea, coffee, sour cream apple crumb pie, shoo-fly pie and vanilla ice cream. It was this very meal that drew Man Vs. Food's Adam Richman to Amish Country, where he went behind the scenes in the Plain & Fancy kitchen for one of his popular show's episodes.

The New "a la carte" Menu. The restaurant also offers a new a la carte menu featuring mouth-watering appetizers, signature soups and salads, charbroiled burgers and sandwiches, and made-from scratch entrees and platters, including several PA Dutch specialties. Guests can "build a platter" with items from the family-style menu or choose one of the daily specials starting at \$10 or less. You can do it all at Plain & Fancy, so why not come and "spend the day!"

* With this ad. Hours/menus/prices/offers may vary.
Please call 717-768-4400 to verify.
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Surrounded by Amish farmland and located on the ten pristine acres of Plain & Fancy, AmishView is mid-way between Bird-in-Hand and Intercourse on Route 340, a AAA Designated, Cultural Scenic Byway. The indoor pool, hot tub, fitness center, whirlpools and fireplaces make the hotel perfect for an intimate getaway, family vacation, or social gathering.

Voted best by Tripadvisor.

AmishView is the recipient of Tripadvisor's Hall of Fame Award, and is the top rated hotel in Lancaster City and County, beating out 97 others.

Adults-Only meets Family-Friendly.

The original, Family-Friendly, three-story building houses a wide array of beautiful, award winning rooms, suites and amenities that will satisfy the requirements of any family. The new, Adults Only, five-story building houses elegant, Grand King rooms, that will fulfill the needs of adults seeking an elegant getaway.

Complimentary breakfast buffet.

AmishView's bigger and better hot country breakfast buffet is second to none, and features made-to-order eggs, omelets and Belgian waffles, with endless helpings of bacon, sausage, country potatoes, baked oatmeal, hot and cold cereals, fresh fruits, bagels, breads, muffins, hot and cold beverages, juices and more, including an outstanding view of Amish country.

Other complimentary features.

Every room or suite includes a kitchen or kitchenette with refrigerator, microwave, sink and coffee maker, custom made furniture, Lenox and Quozel lighting, Serta Presidential Suite beds, wireless internet, DVD players, stereo alarms and CD players, lighted make-up mirrors, iron and ironing board, hair dryers and the Tarocco line of shampoos and soaps.

The only place to find it all.

AmishView is also the only place where you can find it all, with on-premise buggy rides, gardens, farm animals, Amish Experience Theater, Farmland and Homestead Tours, shopping and nationally recognized restaurant.

www.amishviewinn.com

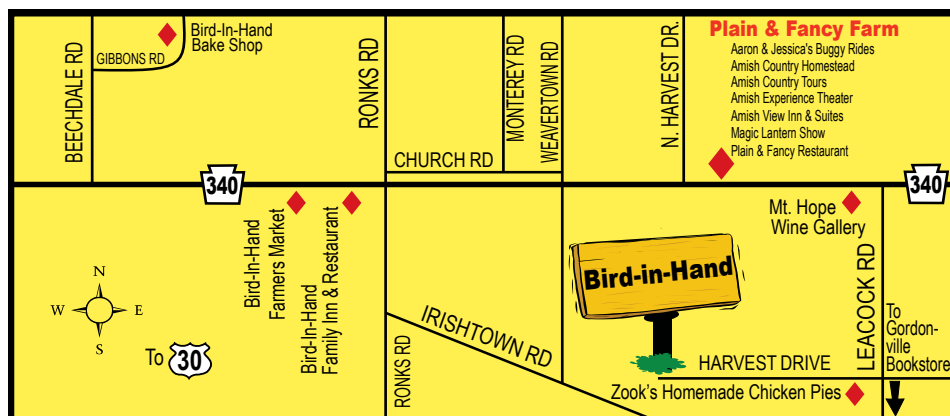
800.373.2387

3125 Old Philadelphia Pike
Route 340
Bird-in-Hand, PA 17505

Welcome to the Village of Bird-in-Hand

Of the many unique village names that dot the Amish Country map, one of the more interesting is Bird-in-Hand. William Penn, an English Quaker, had founded the colony of Penn's Woods, and settlers began arriving from Europe in the early 1700's, moving westward from Philadelphia. The trip by stagecoach, or Conestoga wagon with freight and merchandise, lasted several days. Inns were built every few miles, identified with signs held by an iron pole or attached to the side of the building. The reason for the signs was so that they could be understood by all nationalities. Further, since many teamsters or wagoners were poorly educated they could not read. Given orders to stop at a certain inn, they were able to do so by recognizing the artwork on the signboard.

The legend of the naming of Bird-in-Hand dates to the time when the Old Philadelphia Pike was being laid out. By 1734, surveyors at McNabb's Hotel were discussing whether they should stay at their present location or return to Lancaster to spend the night. One of them said, "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush." The sign in front of the inn, which



became known as the Bird-in-Hand Inn, is known to have once "portrayed a man with a bird in his hand and a bush nearby, in which two birds were perched."

Variations of this sign appear throughout the town today. McNabb's Hotel was destroyed by fire in 1851. By the following year, a three-story hotel was built to replace it. More recently, it was Bitzer's Hotel before becoming the present Village Inn of Bird-in-Hand, a beautiful bed and breakfast property. The Historic Preservation Trust of Lancaster

County states that the existing brick building "may be one of the few 19th century inns in the context of a small town in Lancaster County, which survives with a high degree of architectural integrity." It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. When referring to their bird in hand symbol, some residents say that the bird nestled in the human hand indicates friendship, comfort, and hospitality, all of which you'll discover in this perfectly delightful little village of shops, farmers markets and eateries. ~~ACN~~

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Inhale the aroma. Mmmm... broasted chicken and buttered noodles... ham loaf, chicken pot pie, roast turkey and gravy, pork and sauerkraut with real mashed potatoes, carrots, corn and baked lima beans... They're just a few of the dishes we're famous for – not to mention farm-fresh salads, freshly baked breads... and save room for homemade desserts like our oatmeal pie, made specially by the Restaurant!



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Ship-a-Pie Now Open for Zook's Homemade Chicken Pies

By Clinton Martin

Seeking out indigenous Amish Country foods and, in particular, finding Zook's Homemade Chicken Pies is a fun and rewarding experience for thousands of visitors every year. But invariably there are legions of people who just don't make it to Zook's. We receive requests from far and wide about the possibility of shipping a Zook's Pie, but the service is only offered during a very short window.

That window is now open! My advice --- take advantage of it now, because it will only be open for a few short months. Zook's Homemade Chicken Pies are shipped by Esh Foods, (717) 768-8542. Pies can also be ordered online at eshfoods.com/shop/meats/8-chicken-pies.

Visiting the store where Zook's Homemade Chicken Pies are made is still your best choice whenever possible, since there are many other goodies available on site that you can't get online or over the phone. Plus,



the atmosphere is quintessentially Amish Country, and the views as you drive the back roads are simply stunning. Zook's Homemade Chicken Pies is located at 3194 Harvest Drive, Ronks PA, 17572. Zook's can be reached at (717) 768-0239. 

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☐ July

☐ August

☐ September

☐ October

☐ Winter (Nov/Dec)



To Hershey

To Hershey's Chocolate World

To Harrisburg

To York & Gettysburg

To Kozlar's Christmas Village (Bernville)
PA Turnpike

Brickerville

Lititz
(Map Pg. 15)

Manheim

Mount Joy

Marietta

Wrightsville

Columbia

Lancaster City

Willow Street

Hans Herr Drive

Main St. Closet

Lancaster Airport
AIRPORT RD.

LITITZ PIKE

FRUITVILLE PIKE

MANHEIM PIKE

GREENFIELD RD

Your Place Restaurant & Country Inn of Lancaster

Dutch Apple Dinner Theatre

Turkey Hill Experience

Eastland Alpacas

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ROHRERSTOWN ROAD

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Mount Hope Estate & Winery
(Wine Tasting Daily)
Holiday Open House
11/25-27, 12/3-4
Holidays at Mount Hope 12/9-23



AMISH
COUNTRY





Delight the Bookworm in You at Gordonville Bookstore

By Caleb Bressler

It's the holiday season, and that means getting ready your Christmas gifts and greeting cards. If you are looking for an authentic Amish shopping experience that offers both, be sure to visit the Gordonville Bookstore. Only a short hop, skip, and jump off Lincoln Highway (Rt.30), the bookstore is Amish owned and offers a variety of books and craft-making supplies.

Buying or planning for Christmas gifts is a high-priority this time of year, and Gordonville Bookstore is a fine place for ideas and purchases. For readers in your family, pick up a copy of the latest Amish romance novel. If you know someone interested in Amish customs, you'll find histories, genealogies, and lots of cookbooks. You can also find home décor, games and toys, and even books used by Amish schoolteachers. And instead of buying

Christmas cards this year, why not make them yourself... Amish style? The bookstore has an entire section with supplies to create unique and personal cards to send to your friends for Christmas. Of course, you can simply buy beautiful Amish Christmas cards there ready to send, knowing that they'll be one-of-a-kind and handmade. Delight the bookworm (and more) in you and stop by. Open 7AM-5PM, Monday-Saturday. Visit 275 Old Leacock Rd, Gordonville, PA 17529. Closed Sundays. 

Renninger's Antique Market Makes Sunday Fun Again

By Clinton Martin

There are 52 Sundays every year (except for some leap years when there are 53, but stick with me here.) That means there are 52 opportunities to experience Renninger's Antique Market every year, and if you're reading this now, having never visited Renninger's, by all means do so the first Sunday that you can. You won't regret it.



Renninger's Antique Market is huge, so set aside a few hours to see everything. The outdoor vendor displays are numerous enough to make a visitor dizzy, but then indoors many more shops await.

Typically, visitors start with the outdoor vendors, most of which are open at 4:00am (yes, you read that correctly), and most of whom pack up and leave by 11:00am. The most hardcore collectors and bargain hunters actually bring a flashlight (and sometimes a backup flashlight) so they can scour the merchandise before the sun has risen! The indoor shops remain hopping for much longer, so the outdoor-then-in strategy works well.

Who doesn't enjoy an exciting Sunday morning retail rendezvous? Renninger's has been that fix for decades. Renninger's Antique Market is located along Route 272 in Adamstown PA, and is open every Sunday. More information can be found online at www.renningers.net. Call (717)-336-2177. GPS directions: 2500 North Reading Road, Denver, PA 17517. 



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Publisher's Message

From Brad Igou

I have been writing about Pennsylvania German and Amish Christmas traditions in these pages for over 25 years. So this year I thought it would be interesting to look at customs elsewhere. Last year I noticed a posting about Amish Christmas on Erik Wesner's excellent website www.AmishAmerica.com. (I encourage any of you interested in the Amish to "subscribe" and receive his many interesting posts. Erik is also the author of *Success Made Simple: An Inside Look at Why Amish Businesses Thrive*.) With the kind permission of Erik and the author of the article, we are reprinting "5 Ways the Amish Celebrate Christmas," by Rebecca Miller, a member of an Ohio Amish church, as posted on December 18, 2015.

How Do The Amish Celebrate Christmas? I'll tell you, our readers, how my family celebrates.

1. Youth Christmas Caroling. The other Thursday evening our youth group of around 70 youth gathered at a host family's home. From there we split into 5 groups, with 4 of the groups of around 12 each going with vans, and the rest, about 20 or so, walking to a nearby nursing home.

The next couple hours were spent singing for old folks, widows, and house-bound people. We had also brought grocery bags, gift baskets, and fruit trays which we handed out.

Around 8:30 we were all back and enjoyed a light supper and hot drinks. After some chatting as young folks do, we headed home. If it would have been a Friday night we likely would have played games a while. Many other youth groups, besides family and church groups, go caroling too.

2. Youth Christmas Supper. We had ours the past Friday night. Everyone gathered at my uncle's home where several host Moms had prepared a delicious supper of mashed potatoes, chicken, dressing, and gravy for us. The youth girls had brought in dinner rolls, salads, and desserts. After enjoying our delicious supper we sang some Christmas songs.

We had a guest speaker who showed us slides and spoke of his experiences in Kenya, Africa on mission trips. It was an inspiration for us to think of those less fortunate than us. He encouraged us to be missionaries right where we are.

Earlier this year we had fixed shoe boxes for Samaritan's Purse. We did this instead of exchanging gifts as we usually do. We finished the evening playing games and in fellowship with each other.

3. Christmas Programs. Pretty well every Amish school has a Christmas program. This is usually the highlight of the year for the children. There will be an hour or more of songs, poems, and a few skits the children have practiced over the past couple weeks. Though the program will have some humor in it, it will mostly be Christmas songs and Christmas-related poems and acts. There might be a nativity scene also. We want to keep with the true story of Christmas and the season of giving and joy. It is a great evening of fellowship and fun.

4. Christmas Day. This year our Christmas Day will be a quiet day spent at home—reading the Christmas story, singing, playing games, and of course eating all the yummy food Mom has been preparing for days. We will probably have a family night of games and snack at our house on Christmas Eve.

5. Family Gatherings. We are hosting both Dad's and Mom's families this year. It just came out that it was our turn to have both. Mom's family will be here on New Year's Day. Dad's family will be here on Old Christmas.

In church over Christmas we have the Christmas scriptures and sing Christmas-related songs. Another big thing for us is sending out and receiving Christmas cards and letters. We also bake a lot of Christmas goodies and fix plates to share with neighbors, the mailman, business associates, and others. Some families do family gift exchanges. This year our cousin girls exchanged names.

The main focus of the season is still first of all remembering Christ—the true meaning of Christmas, family, gift-giving, and helping cheer others. I hope this will give people a look into our home for the holidays. Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year to you all!

* * *

Here at Amish Country News, we are thankful and fortunate to observe, share, and respect the many ways different people celebrate the holidays. We hope that the Christmas message of love strengthens your family, and that the message of peace comforts troubled hearts, as our unsettled world moves into the New Year. 



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This 30 to 35 minute tour is the only ride available on Sundays. The Sunday Ride is a lovely tour through an all Amish area. There are no stops on this ride due to the Amish's observance of the Sabbath.

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